



## What is Radio Frequency Identification (RFID)?

RFID is a wireless technology that stores and retrieves data remotely on devices. Technology components of an RFID system consist of an RFID tag with a microchip and antenna, a reader with an antenna, and a database. For added security and border crossing convenience, an RFID tag will be embedded in the new Enhanced Driver License and Identification card (EDL/ID).

- ✓ **The EDL/ID is voluntary**
- ✓ **It's available in January 2008**
- ✓ **It costs \$15 more than a driver license or ID card**

### How does RFID work in Washington State's EDL/ID card?

- The EDL/ID card will include an Ultra High Frequency Passive Vicinity RFID tag.
  - **Ultra High Frequencies** typically offer better range, and can transfer data faster than low and high frequencies.
  - **Passive** RFID tags do not have a power source. They draw power from the RFID reader to energize the microchip's circuits. The antenna enables the tag to transmit the information on the chip to a reader. The reader converts the radio waves reflected back from the RFID tag into digital information that is passed on to the computers that use it.
  - **Vicinity** RFID tags can be read from several feet away from the reader.
- The RFID tag does not contain any personal identifying information, just a unique reference number.
- The RFID uses the low-end of the electromagnetic spectrum. The waves coming from the reader are similar to the waves coming to your car radio.
- At the border, the RFID reader will energize the RFID tag and transmit the EDL/ID's unique reference number back to the border officer.
- The unique reference number will be matched to Department of Licensing (DOL) records to verify the information contained on the front of the EDL/ID card.
- Data encryption, secure networks, and firewalls will protect the transmission of the EDL/ID information.
- For added security, DOL will provide a security sleeve to protect the RFID tag from being read when the cardholder is not using it for border crossing.
- This RFID technology is required by the federal government to facilitate rapid identification checks at the border, and complies with minimum requirements and best practices for card security.
- DOL will fully disclose the use of RFID, its purpose, content, and security to all EDL/ID applicants and interested parties.